<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

Please cancel Claims 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 20 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image search apparatus which searches for an image ~~by using~~, the apparatus comprising:

image storage means for storing a plurality of images;[[,]]

region information storage means for storing partial images included in the respective images stored in the image storage means in correspondence with the respective images~~, and~~;

region feature storage means for storing features of the partial images stored in the region information storage means in correspondence with the partial images~~;~~

~~comprising:~~;

~~image feature designation means for designating a feature of a search target image~~ receiving means for receiving a feature of a search target image as a search condition to search for an image;

~~candidate image determination~~ search means for searching ~~for features of~~ ~~partial images in the region feature storage means on the basis of the feature of the image~~ ~~which is designated by said image feature designation means, and determining~~ an image including a partial image which ~~is made to correspond to a partial image obtained on the~~ ~~basis of a search result as a candidate image from the images stored in the image storage~~ ~~means~~ contains the feature received by said receiving means as a candidate image; and

- 2 -

search result display means for displaying ~~a reduced image of~~ the candidate

image <u>which corresponds to said search condition,</u> ~~determined by said candidate image~~

~~determination means, wherein said search result display means displays a reduced image of~~

~~the candidate image upon enlarging~~ <u>while emphasizing</u> the partial image included in the

candidate image.

      2.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim·1,

~~characterized in that~~ <u>wherein</u> when a plurality of candidate images are obtained on the basis

of a search result, said search result display means displays reduced images of the plurality

of candidate images in the form of a list.

      3.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,

~~characterized in that~~ wherein said search result display means displays ~~a reduced image of~~

the candidate image upon enlarging a plurality of partial images included in the candidate

image.

      4.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,

~~characterized in that~~ <u>wherein</u> said search result display means synthesizes ~~the~~ <u>a</u> plurality of

partial images <u>from the plurality of images</u> to generate a new single partial image, and

displays the new single partial image as a reduced image.

      5.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 4,

characterized in that wherein said search result display means generates a new single

partial image by synthesizing the a plurality of partial images from the plurality of images

while keeping a relative positional relationship between the plurality of partial images is

kept.

     6.   (Cancelled)

     7.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1,

characterized in that wherein sizes of the a plurality of partial images from the plurality of

images are unified to a predetermined size.

     8. to 11.   (Cancelled)

     12.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1 [[8]],

characterized in that wherein said search result display means alternately displays a plurality

of candidate images the reduced images at the same position one by one in an automatic

manner.

     13.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1 [[8]],

characterized in that wherein the apparatus further comprises switching means for switching

display of a plurality of candidate images the reduced images in said search result display

means, and

- 4 -

said search result display means alternately displays the plurality of candidate images ~~the reduced images~~ at the same position one by one on the basis of a switching instruction from said switching means.

14.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said search result display means displays the ~~reduced~~ candidate image in an area with a predetermined size.

15.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that the partial image comprises a rectangular image having a region surrounded by a circumscribed rectangle of a predetermined object region included in the image~~ wherein said search result display means displays a circumscribed rectangular image surrounding each partial image searched out by said search means.

16.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said search result display means displays a reduced image of the candidate image while ~~emphasizing~~ superimposing the emphasized partial image ~~included in~~ on the candidate image.

17.   (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the region feature storage means stores, as a feature of the image, at least one of concept information expressing a concept obtained from the partial image, ~~language~~ text information expressing the concept ~~in a language~~ of the partial image,

and an image feature expressing a feature of the partial image, ~~and a combination of the~~

~~concept information, the language information, and the image feature~~.

18.   (Currently Amended) An image search method for an image search

apparatus which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images included in the

respective images stored in the image storage unit in correspondence with the respective

images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images stored

in the region information storage unit in correspondence with the partial images, said

method comprising:

~~an image feature designation step of designating a feature of a search target~~

~~image~~ a receiving step of receiving a feature of a search target image as a search condition to

search for an image;

~~a candidate image determination~~ a search step of searching for ~~features of~~

~~partial images in the region feature storage unit on the basis of the designated feature of the~~

~~image, and determining~~ an image including a partial image which ~~is made to correspond to a~~

~~partial image obtained on the basis of a search result as a candidate image from the images~~

~~stored in the image storage unit~~ contains the feature received by said receiving step as a

candidate image; and

a search result display step of <u>displaying the candidate image which</u>

<u>corresponds to said search condition, while emphasizing</u> ~~enlarging~~ the partial image

included in the ~~determined~~ candidate image ~~and displaying a reduced image of the candidate~~

~~image~~.

19. to 21.   (Cancelled)

22.   (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording medium storing

a program for causing a computer, which can be connected to

an image storage unit which stores a plurality of images,

a region information storage unit which stores partial images

included in the respective images stored in the image storage unit in correspondence with

the respective images, and

a region feature storage unit which stores features of the partial images in the

region information storage unit in correspondence with the partial images, <u>the program</u>

<u>causing the computer</u> to execute<u>:</u>

~~an image feature designation step of designating a feature of a search target~~

~~image~~ <u>a receiving step of receiving a feature of a search target image as a search condition to</u>

<u>search for an image;</u>

~~a candidate image determination~~ <u>a search</u> step of searching <u>for</u> ~~features of~~

~~partial images in the region feature storage unit on the basis of the designated feature of the~~

~~image, and determining~~ an image <u>including a partial image</u> which ~~is made to correspond to a~~

~~partial image obtained on the basis of a search result as a candidate image from the images~~

- 7 -

~~stored in the image storage unit~~ <u>contains the feature received by said receiving step as a</u>

<u>candidate image</u>; and

a search result display step of<u>displaying the candidate image which</u>

<u>corresponds to said search condition, while emphasizing</u> ~~enlarging~~ the partial image

included in the ~~determined~~ candidate image ~~and displaying a reduced image of the candidate~~

~~image~~.